

From: Espey, John
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/22/02 3:00pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Dear sir or mam,

I would like to voice my opinion on the treatment of Microsoft and its founder, Bill Gates. I use a few Microsoft products for things at which they do particularly well (Excel, Windows 2000/XP, Outlook, Internet Explorer, and a few others). These products are excellent products despite the fact that there are no real competitors in the marketplace. None of these products has had any serious competition for the last few years, and yet they continue to get better with each new release. My point is that Microsoft does not think the same way that a typical federal employee or bureaucrat does. That is, Microsoft realizes what so few in our society today do, that in order to remain competitive in the marketplace, one must wake up every morning with a renewed focus on how to add more value for less money to one's customers. This is how Microsoft destroys their competitors, and this is why Oracle, AOL, Sun, IBM, Apple, Novell, et al. are so scared of this company. They are choosing to battle Microsoft in court under the ambiguous veil of the public good, rather than in the marketplace via innovation.

Well, I represent the public, and I do not feel that Microsoft has harmed me in any way. I am not a helpless victim as David Boies would have you believe; I can make a choice for what software I want to install on my own machine. I do not need a legislator deciding what software needs to be installed on my machine. I want that to be decided in a free market. And if there are no competitors capable of surviving in the market with Microsoft, then so be it. The only way this can occur is if Microsoft provides a vastly superior product. While this may not benefit the owners of the competitors of Microsoft, it is certainly a tremendous benefit to consumers.

I truly resent the idea that a successful business is a threat to anyone. A band of thugs is a threat, a company that seeks to sell me products that are superior to those of their competitor is a good thing. I feel as if Microsoft is being attacked not because they are evil, but because they are good. What kind of message does this send to our children? Don't work too hard, otherwise your jealous competitors will sue you until you see your company broken in two? Please rethink the message you want to convey to the next generation of entrepreneurs.

I love my country because the express purpose of the government is to protect the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. What these rights translate into is really one thing: the right to property. Without this right, no other rights can exist. Without this right, we would live in the Dark Ages or worse yet some backwards Middle Eastern country. Every person in this country has a right to their property as

long as they aren't using it to coerce others. Why then is this right being denied to the shareholders of Microsoft? I think it is time to rethink the position that has been taken for the past 8 years about Microsoft. The owners, employees, and partners of Microsoft must be afforded the most basic of all rights. They must have the right to their own property and you must protect this for them.

Thank you for your time,
John Espey
Senior Consultant, Tallan, Inc.